
SOUTH AFRICA



BACKGROUND

The United States increased development assistance to South Africa following the historic 1994 national election. Subsequently, in March 1995, Presidents Clinton and Mandela agreed to establish the U.S. - South Africa Binational Commission, co-chaired by Vice President Gore and Deputy Executive President Mbeki. The assistance this commission brings is in addition to USAID projects.

There are three distinct reasons for USAID's concentrated focus on South Africa. Firstly, South Africa is a monumental symbol to the world, given its substantial progress in resolving severe political, racial, and ethnic differences through negotiation and reconciliation. Secondly, South Africa continues to play a significant role in establishing political stability in Africa, and the state of the South African economy has a direct impact on most, if not all, sub-Saharan countries. Thus, given South Africa's strategic and economic importance in Africa, it is in USAID's interest to help ensure that South Africa achieves its fullest potential. Thirdly, U.S. private sector investment in South Africa has been abundant and continues to grow. Indeed, South Africa is one of the United State's best trading partners on the continent.

U.S. assistance, in conjunction with that of other major international donors and South Africans themselves, has produced clear benefits. South Africa has a broader, more diverse economic base than most other countries within the region. It has a comparatively stable democracy, with broad civil society participation and pluralism, as well as more equitable social service delivery systems and capacity, and more equitable access to domestic and international markets.

Despite political, economic, and social advances in South Africa, such as increased representation of the majority population in both government agencies and private sector enterprises, the new government is plagued by a host of problems. Reducing poverty in South Africa is the critical challenge. Indeed, millions of South Africans lack adequate housing as well as safe water and sanitation. Despite some advances towards the 1 million homes promised by the ANC in 1994, too many South Africans remain unable to afford more than shacks in apartheid township shanty-towns that lack electricity, running water, and basic sanitation services. Additionally, over one third of the adult work force is unemployed and 12.5 million lack a sound basic education according to the Draft Policy for Adult Basic Education and Training, April 1997. Generally, poor access to basic health care services, especially in the rural areas, and the increased incidence of HIV/AIDS threaten the country's economic and development goals.

The new Government of South Africa has made striking progress during its first four years in establishing policies to address these needs and a host of other critical problems. The fact that such policies were developed with broad-based consultation is equally impressive. The principal contemporary development challenge facing South Africa is to translate policies developed by the new government into practices that will increase access to quality education, health, housing, and economic advancement opportunities. Failure to address these needs in a sustained manner could jeopardize the considerable progress already made in deepening democratic values, and in keeping South Africa on its chosen path of pragmatic economic development.

South Africa Social and Economic Indicators	South Africa 1997	South Africa 1994	Sub-Saharan Africa 1994
Population Structure & Growth			
Population (millions)	40.60	36.79	563.82
% Population 0 to 14	36	36	-
Population growth rate	1.7	2.1	-
Urban population as % of total population	49.7	49.2	30.6
Mortality & Life Expectancy			
Infant mortality rate	48	-	91 ¹
Under 5 mortality rate	65	-	147 ¹
Life expectancy (m/f)	62/68	-	49/52 ¹
Economic Performance & Expenditures			
GNP per capita (\$)	3,210	3,260	489
GNP growth rate	-	5.7 ^{1, 2}	-1.0 ^{1, 2}
Military expenditure as % of GNP	2.2 ³	-	-
Public spending on education as % of GNP (all levels)	7.9	7.3	4.3
Development Assistance & Debt			
Official development assistance per capita (\$)	12.30	7.70	-
Official development assistance as % of GNP	.40	.25	-
Total external debt (billions, \$)	25.2	21.7	-
Total external debt as % of GNP	21.2	18.2	74.4
Illiteracy			
Adult illiteracy (m/f)	15/17	16/18 ³	35/52 ³

Primary Source: World Bank, Data Development Group, 1999.

¹Statistical Profile of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (SPESSA), UNESCO/World Bank Data, 1998.

²Data from 1997.

³Data from 1990-1996.

⁴Data from 1995.

STATUS OF SOUTH AFRICA'S EDUCATION REFORM

One of apartheid's most devastating legacies was its impact on the education system. Under-funding, overcrowding, poor facilities, extremely high student-teacher ratios, inadequate teacher training, and insufficient teaching materials frequently characterized the black schools. The Mbeki government, in collaboration with the donor community and other partners, is committed to educational reform intended to increase the majority population's access to quality education and to foster empowerment through increased economic and social opportunity. Critical incidents in this process of educational reform include the South African Schools Act (SASA), the introduction of a new curriculum, Curriculum 2005 (C2005), the launch of the Culture of Learning and Teaching Services (COLTS) Campaign, and more recently, the announcement of National Norms and Standards for School Funds.

The SASA came into effect on January 1, 1997. It created a single national system of education with two categories of schools: public and independent (previously a fragmented education system existed with 17 departments of education). Schooling is compulsory for people between 6 and 15 years of age, and access of learners to all public schools is guaranteed. The governance of every school is vested in its governing body, which is representative of parents, educators, nonteaching staff, and learners in grade 8 and above.

Curriculum 2005 replaces the rote learning emphasized in the past with a curriculum that encourages concrete learning outcomes. Implemented in 1998 in grade 1, by the year 2005, C2005 will be in all grades. The new curriculum already has introduced drastic changes to teaching methods and syllabus content, and broadened access to opportunity by enabling learners to acquire comparable qualifications, whether they are in schools, colleges, or other training programs.

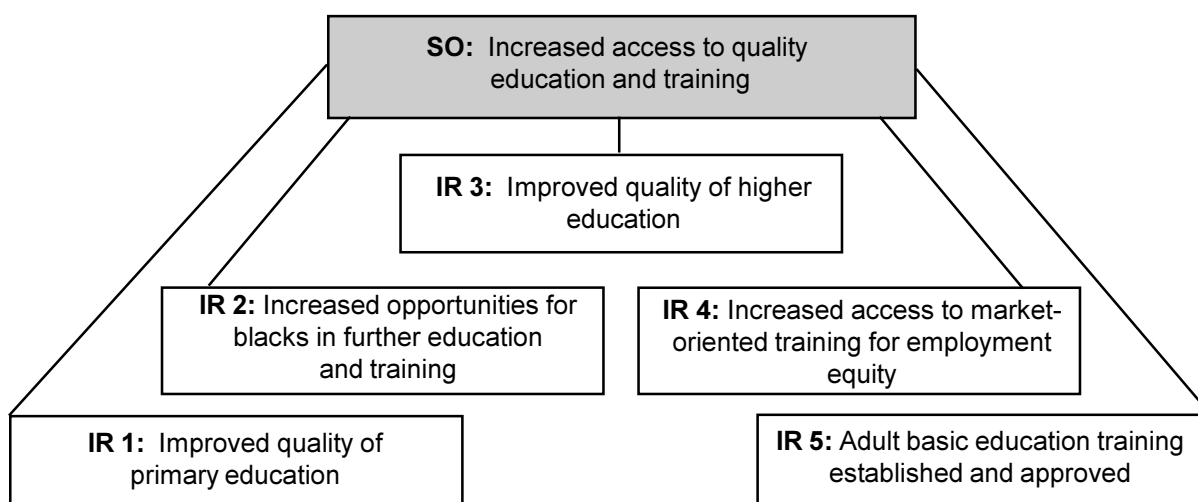
In February 1997, then President Mandela launched the COLTS Campaign. COLTS is a five-year intervention that aims to restore the normal functioning of schools and improve the quality of teaching and learning. The main elements of the COLTS campaign are time on task for teachers and learners, improved access to basic resources, democratic selection and empowerment of school governing body members, and eradication of all forms of criminality at schools.

In October 1997, the department published Draft National Norms and Standards for School Funds. Essentially, schools in each province would be ranked according to their physical conditions and levels of poverty. Provincial education departments would first target the poorest 40% of public schools. The provincial departments were expected to pay 70% of the running costs of the schools but only 30% in wealthier areas. The schools would have to pay for the rest themselves. School fees were subject to negotiation with parents. However, parents earning less than 30 times the annual fee charged by the school would be eligible for partial or total exclusion of fee payment.

USAID PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

In 1998, USAID began operation of its District Development and Support Project (DDSP), designed to help schools and their district support offices implement the policies and programs instituted by the national government. The project contracts with NGO service providers (many of whom received support from USAID during the apartheid government) to help schools identify, develop, and use instructional materials based on C2005, to improve teacher performance, and to introduce continuous assessment and other methods embedded in the ministry's approach to education.

Strategic Objective and Intermediate Results



Program Title, Funding, and Dates

Support to Tertiary Education

Project Number: 674-0309

Funding level

\$136.8 million

Initial obligation date and estimated completion date

1990-2002

South Africa Basic Education Reconstruction

Project Number: 674-0314

Funding level

\$90.4 million

Initial obligation date and estimated completion date

1993-2003

Tertiary Education Linkages

Project Number: 674-0315

Funding level

\$50.9 million

Initial obligation date and estimated completion date

1994-2003

Transition Support Fund

Project Number: 674-0318

Funding level

\$24.7 million

Initial obligation date and estimated completion date

1993-2003

Transformed Education System**Project Number: 674-0323***Funding level*

\$95 million

Initial obligation date and estimated completion date

1993-2004

Program Conditionalities

None, USAID does not provide nonproject assistance to South Africa.

Project Contractors

USAID's District Development and Support Project is implemented primarily through an institutional contract with the Research Triangle Institute and sub-contractors Khulisa Management Services, the Centre for Education Policy Development (CEPD), and Joint Education Trust (JET). The contract began in 1998 and will continue through 2003.

South Africa Education Indicators	South Africa 1996	South Africa 1994	Sub-Saharan Africa 1994
Primary (Grades 1-7)			
Total enrollment (thousands)	8,159.4	7,972.0 ¹	-
Gross enrollment ratio	86 ^{1, 2}	131	76.7
Girls as proportion of gross	54.01	129	69.2
Teachers (thousands)	144.01	-	-
Teachers, % female	47 ^{1, 3}	58.4	38.2
Pupil-teacher ratio	27:1 ¹	37:1	41:1
Secondary (Grades 8-12)			
Total enrollment (thousands)	3,940.7 ²	3,756 ¹	-
Gross enrollment ratio	94.0	91.0	26.5
Gross enrollment ratio, female		97.0	24.4
Teachers (thousands)	128.8 ⁴	128.8 ¹	-
Teachers, % female	46.9	64.0 ¹	-
Pupil-teacher ratio	29:1 ¹	28:1 ¹	-
Tertiary			
Total enrollment (thousands)	562.0 ¹	-	-
Gross enrollment ratio	16 ^{1, 2}	15.9	3.1
Gross enrollment ratio, female	15 ^{1, 2}	-	-
Finance			
Education as % of GNP	7.3 ^{1, 5}	7.3	4.3
Primary education as % of total education budget	48 ^{1, 6}	-	-
Per pupil expenditure, primary (\$)	431.00 ¹	-	-

Primary Source: World Bank, Data Development Group, 1999.

¹Statistical Profile of Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (SPESSA), UNESCO/World Bank Data, 1998.

²Data from 1997.

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⁴Data from 1994.

⁵Data from 1998-1999.

⁶Data from 1995-1996.

OTHER DONORS WITH EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Other donors in basic education include the United Kingdom (UK), the Netherlands, Ireland, Denmark, the EU, and Canada. The UK has begun support to basic education in one province (Eastern Cape) in a project that serves as a partial model for the new USAID projects. The Netherlands is providing similar assistance in one region in another province, KwaZulu-Natal. USAID will cooperate with both of these donor projects.

